1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

return by themselves to their owners' houses, where they are given a feed of salt and powdered grain. Tethered animals are also fed with gathered leaves. Each animal has its name, which it knows; unless they wander into enclosed fields they are never beaten nor spoken to roughly. As you walk about Lingthem you come upon untended cattle in every direction; and one of the strangest sights is to watch the animals returning home of an evening. A herd of cattle, perhaps a score or more, will arrive in the centre of a group of houses, and will then each turn away to their own homes; as soon as they have settled under their houses they are given their evening feed. Stranger still is the fact that during the cold months—roughly from February to April—all the cattle, except the milch-cows, are sent in an untended group into the forest up the hill behind the village. When people want their cattle back they go up the hill to the place where they are liable to congregate, or, as the Lepchas put it 'where the cattle live in the forest', usually under some noticeably big tree. Within twenty-four hours cattle which have been completely untended for four months can be collected and brought back. While the cattle are in the forest a State tax of two annas a head a month is charged.

The taming of animals so completely is a remarkable feat in itself, and is also a good symbol of the Lepchas' chief attitudes; I think it has also an important bearing on their psychological development. In neighbouring tribes herding cattle is one of the major occupations of growing boys; in this way they achieve a certain self-reliance and learn to exercise their judgement. This discipline is almost completely absent for Lepcha boys; only when predatory animals are known or suspected to be in the neighbourhood are they set to watch animals. All through his childhood and adolescence the Lepcha boy is under the supervision of, and usually in company with his elders; and I feel sure that the lack of self-reliance, the inability to stand alone, which is one of the most obvious characteristics of the young Lepcha man, is enhanced by the lack of any work specially given over to children.

The size of the herds varies very considerably. The average is about six or seven head; a few households have considerably more and some people have only one or two, or even none at all.

Goats are raised exclusively for food and sacrifice and are never milked; they are not highly esteemed and people usually only

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

and has not yet reached the age of puberty. In spite of this, however, he[1] is well aware of the facts of life, and a few years ago was seduced by his uncle's wife, a woman of thirty, with whom he is still on intimate terms.

Tafoor's second child is a girl, and although three years younger than Chimpet she looks much older. She already nurses the two younger children, and knows how to cook, and is perfectly capable, so her father tells me, of running the house. No arrangements have so far been made for her marriage, but Tafoor hopes to hear of a suitable partner during the course of the next few years.

* * * * *

Chodo is Tafoor's younger brother, and so far has only reached the rank of *Ka-Ne*. He was thirty this year and his wife, whom he married some ten years ago, is the same age. He told me that when he was about five or six he used to play at making little houses out of sticks and leaves; also he was fond of playing with swings, but his parents would not let him do this in summer-time because, so they said, the demons would mistake him for fruit.* As a child he was frightened of devils and did not like walking about alone at night; and even now he does not like going by himself in the forest after dark. When he is alone and feels frightened he prays all the time to Guru Rimpoche to keep him safe. He never carries a charm "like ignorant people," because if he did this Guru Rimpoche would think he had no faith in his prayers and would therefore do nothing to help him. He knows that his wife has relations with Chimpet but does not mind in the least: "unless one learns, how can one ever be proficient?" He did the same thing himself as a boy; and even now frequently goes to the forest with Tafoor's wife, with whom he is of course legally entitled to cohabit. As a child he was sent to school at Mangen but only read the first three books. After this he spent a year in the Maharaja's palace in

* Fruit, as it swings in the breeze, is thought to be plucked by passing devils. Cf. *The Golden Bough*.

[1] [i.e., Chimpet, the son of Tafoor, an Umzet. – Analyst]